

STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 6
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Report concerning the Care & Repair Home Improvement Agency

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PROGRESS REPORT CARE & REPAIR HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

1. PURPOSE

To provide Members with a report relating to the performance and achievements of the Care & Repair Home Improvement Agency over the last twelve months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to scrutinise the performance and achievements by providing challenge where necessary and to suggest ideas and initiatives to support the continued delivery of priorities within the service.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1.1 Providing affordable, warm, safe and secure housing is the cornerstone of a strong society. The Agency assists old, frail, disabled (adults & children) and vulnerable people to live independently in homes that are warm and safe. The Care & Repair Service plays a major role in the City in reducing health and social care costs, and for individual clients reducing pain, relieving anxiety, and improving quality of life.
- 3.1.2 Whilst this work cuts across the entire Sustainable Community Strategy, it is most closely aligned to the priority “Creating opportunities –tackling inequalities.”
- 3.1.3 The Agency is committed to the Sustainable Communities Vision, specifically with reference to “improving the quality of life of all its people”. Care & Repair assist adults and children that have huge physical, mental and financial disadvantages.
- 3.1.4 A large proportion of the Agency’s work is included in The Housing Strategy 2011-2015.

4. BACKGROUND

Care and Repair was established as a Home Improvement Agency (HIA) in Peterborough City Council almost 20 years ago. The Agency is one of many Home Improvement Agencies that geographically cover most of England & Wales.

Demographic changes have resulted in an aging population, people are living longer and many with long term health conditions. More people are surviving serious illness and disability, and therefore the demands for Care and Repair services are increasing.

5. ACHIEVEMENTS

The Care and Repair team continues to assist vulnerable, old and frail people including disabled adults and children to continue to live independently in safe and warm homes. Last year the Agency was recognised at the highest level, receiving two national Foundations (The National Co-ordinating body for HIAs appointed by the Department of Communities and Local Government) Awards. The first award in 2013 was for delivering the best Home Improvement Agency (HIA) handyperson service in England & Wales. The second was achieving runner-up in the Agency of the Year Award. Furthermore the Agency has just obtained another national award winning the Foundations "Integration Champion" category for 2014. All the awards were presented at the House of Lords. They demonstrate the Agency's high level of performance in the Home Improvement Agency field, both in terms of the quality of delivery and best value. The most recent award demonstrates how the Agency has worked with Housing, Health and Adult Social Care, Children Services and a range of other partners such as Age Concern to improve the quality of life for local people.

5.1 PERFORMANCE

5.1.1 In the last financial year the Care and Repair Team have:

- Responded to over 15,000 telephone calls
- Directly assisted over 5,500 vulnerable adults and children,
- Completed over 5,000 tangible interventions varying in cost from £0 to £50,000.

5.1.2 These interventions included:

- 940 minor aids and adaptations, (for example grab rails, key safes, stair rails, small ramps, half steps)
- 199 major disabled facility grant funded adaptations (including bathroom adaptations, door widening, stair lifts, through floor lifts, kitchen adaptations, extensions)
- 51 central heating installations
- 69 referrals to British Gas Heatabo for central heating provisions.
- 61 major repairs to domestic properties (including damp work, structural repairs, electrical upgrade, kitchen installations, roof & chimney repairs, window replacements)
- 3,500 Handyperson cases, the majority were for older people.
- Work for Kings Lynn and West Norfolk which included 100 surveys which resulted in 80 disabled installations.
- 19 privately funded disabled adaptations, totalling over £50,000
- 62 cases funded by the Electrical Safety Council

5.1.3 Achieved:

- Raised £76,000 of funding from private/charitable sources
- £5,000 funding from the Electrical Safety Council following a successful application
- Increased benefit income for 22 elderly, vulnerable or disabled clients totalling £95,044 per year, on average these clients received additional income of £4,320.18 each per year.
- Received 249 compliments,
- Achieved Satisfaction rates of 100% for work for Cross Keys Homes and over 99% for all other work.

5.1.4 The Agency assists vulnerable people in many more ways which include:

- Feasibility work for Housing and Social Care concerning major adaptation work.
- Feasibility visits for Housing Needs to ensure properties through Choice Based Lettings are suitable for clients with disabilities or can be appropriately adapted.
- Undertaking repairs (Works in Default) in privately rented properties where the Housing Enforcement Officers have served Statutory Notice on a landlord and they have not complied. This ensures that vulnerable private sector tenants live in safe, healthy housing.
- Fire safety checks for vulnerable clients and the installation of smoke alarms (provided by the Fire Service).
- Visits for Trading Standards to combat rogue builders.
- Installations of security measures for the Police, and for vulnerable people at risk of domestic violence.
- Access/utilisation of relocation grants for disabled adults and families with disabled children to enable them to move to suitable properties.
- Represent older and disabled people at steering groups, partnership boards, project groups and working groups.

5.2 Benchmarking

5.2.1 Care and Repair continues to perform favourably in comparison to other Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs).

5.2.2 Peterborough Care and Repair is an average sized HIA, using the Department for Communities and Local Government data 2011/12, the number of disabled facility grant completions in Peterborough are more than twice the national average (303 compared to 130 nationally). This is due to the effective partnership work between Care and Repair, Housing and the Occupational Therapy Service.

5.2.3 Delivery times:

Foundations the National Body for HIAs survey of 65 Agencies (2013) reported that the Disabled Facility Grants national mean average time from receipt of a referral to completion of work as:

- 41 weeks, with a mode time of 30 weeks, this compares to,
- Cambridgeshire HIA average delivery time is currently 29 weeks.
- Peterborough Care and Repair current delivery time average is 15 weeks from receipt of referral to completion of work.
- At the recent awards ceremony at the House of Lords Peterborough Care & Repair was commended on consistently having no waiting lists. Almost all HIAs have significant waiting lists, the best performers have delays in allocation of 2-6 weeks the poorest over 52 weeks.
- Peterborough Care & Repair has no waiting list for any of the services it offers, allocation of work is on receipt of referral or request.

5.2.4 Cost of works:

The Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG) data from 312 Local Authorities for 2011/12 shows the average cost of a Disabled Facility Grant as:

- Nationally £6,878
- Peterborough £5,525.

These figures demonstrate that the Disabled facility grant delivery at Peterborough is 20% cheaper, and delivery achieved in less than half the time nationally and locally.

The last 50 disabled facility grant cases completed in 2013/14 have an average cost of £5,151.50 which is 25% lower than 2011/12 DCLG national average. This may reduce further following a recent procurement exercise and framework being put in place.

- 5.2.5 The Peterborough Handyperson cost is less than £30 per intervention. This is less than 50% of the average cost nationally and was the lowest in England. The Handyperson scheme interventions are measured using a national toolkit. The output of this toolkit indicates that for every £1 spent on the service £2 is saved in health and social care costs.

5.3 Further Development

- 5.3.1 Currently the Agency is working on an external wall insulation scheme for vulnerable people living in Park Homes in the City. Over 20 installations have been completed which have transformed the properties and the residents quality of life. The work has also identified and addressed problems with heating systems, electrical installations and access to the park homes themselves.
- 5.3.2 The Agency has broadened its remit and is undertaking small to medium size works (repairs, maintenance and improvements) in respect of children's respite care and residential care homes, children's centres, nurseries and schools. This is ensuring a fast and effective response for those services as well as achieving savings for the Council.
- 5.3.3 The Agency has been successful obtaining a grant from the Gas Safety Council to help with Gas Safety works in domestic properties for disabled and older people.
- 5.3.4 The Agency is undertaking the maintenance, repair and installation of disabled adaptations in the City Council two permanent Traveller Sites, again many of the tenants on these sites are elderly and some disabled.
- 5.3.5 The Agency is involved in the project to use Assisted Technology in care packages.
- 5.3.6 Care and Repair has been successful in passing the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire to supply Home Improvement Agency Service to East Northants and Wellingborough Councils.
- 5.3.7 Work has commenced on an initial proposal to deliver HIA service on a shared service basis for Rutland Unitary Authority.
- 5.3.8 Care and Repair has tendered the work for bathroom adaptations, heating installations and the minor aids and adaptations. Tenders are currently being evaluated for the bathroom and heating lots. A framework of several contractors has been chosen to deliver these works. A single contractor will deliver the minor aids and adaptations work. The prices are less than those when the contract was in place 2 years ago. The tender process has established best value, a high capacity and a secure base to deliver the Agency's installation services for the next three years.

5.4 Impact

- 5.4.1 It is easy to recognise the significant impact a person's housing has on their health and well-being. The range of adaptations, handyperson, repairs, maintenance work and advice provided by Peterborough Care and Repair ensures that disabled, vulnerable and elderly residents are able to live independently in their own homes. Adaptation and repair work results in savings for Health & Social Care Services by preventing falls, accidents, reducing

the need or extent of domiciliary care, preventing premature moves into residential care/hospital and assists/enables hospital release and care to be delivered at home.

5.4.2 Examples of the cost savings to wider Health and Society through the work of Care and Repair:

- Postponing entry into residential care by just one year through adapting a person's home saves £28,080 per year (Lang and Buisson (2008) Annual Cost of Care Home Report)
- The national average cost of a major housing adaptation is £6,396 and has an average life of at least five years (Heywood and Turner (2007) Better outcomes, lower costs) The average cost of a disabled facility grant in Peterborough in 2012/13 was £4,800 with 306 residents receiving adaptations through disabled facility grants.
- A fall at home that leads to a hip fracture costs the state £28,665 on average. This is 4.5 times the average cost of a major housing adaptation and over 100 times the cost of fitting hand and grab rails to prevent falls (Heywood and Turner (2007) Better outcomes, lower costs)
- Housing adaptations reduce the need for daily visits and reduce or remove costs of home care. This can lead to savings ranging from £1,200 to £29,00 a year (Heywood and Turner (2007) Better outcomes, lower costs)
- The hospital discharge service delivered by Care and Repair, installing minor aids and adaptations such as key safes, grab rails and falls prevention work creates savings of £120 per day - the amount charged to a local authority when patients block beds in hospital (Personal Social Sciences Research Unit for Department of Health (2010) National Evaluation of POPPs)

5.4.3 On a personal basis for clients the Agency's work:

- Reduces pain, injury and distress following accidents and falls.
- Reduces ailments linked with poor or inappropriate housing.
- Relieving anxiety.
- Reduces pain.
- Reduces visits to the Doctors, Drop in Centres and Accident and Emergency.
- Reduces the need for care.
- Improves dignity.
- Improves access in and around home.
- Enables people to live at home
- Improves independence
- Enables people to remain living in their community near family, friends and support.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the Scrutiny Committee will comment on and make recommendations relating to the updates provided in this report in order that delivery potential is maximised for the benefit of our communities.

7. CONSULTATION

N/A

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 Comments and recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee members will be considered as part of the ongoing development and delivery of the Care and Repair Service.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1 N/A

10. APPENDICES

10.1 N/A